

From: [Serge Bonte](#)
To: [Rental Housing Committee](#)
Cc: [Sustainability](#); [City Manager](#); [ConserveWater](#)
Subject: re: 1/31/23 Meeting - Agenda Item 7.2 - Utilities/RUBS and CSFRA
Date: Sunday, January 29, 2023 11:33:02 AM

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Honorable Chair and Rental Housing Commissioners:

While there is a lot to clarify about the way rents are defined in the CSFRA and how schemes like RUBS conflict with that definition, I hope the City will also look into the issue from an equity and environmental perspective.

PG&E (and SVCE) have long run programs to help lower income customers with their bills (CARE and FERA). These programs were extended and were vital at the height of the pandemic. The City in conjunction with PG&E and SVCE should research if low income residents were or are still prevented from getting that assistance because of schemes like RUBS. I hope the City would find it unacceptable that some of its more vulnerable residents could be "robbed" from these discounts. Further, schemes like RUBS tend to be bloated with management or payment type fees that residents would not incur if dealing directly with the utilities providers.

The City and the State of California have very ambitious sustainability goals. Those goals will rely in great part on every resident doing their part: reducing water and energy consumption, using electricity preferably at certain times... All these actions will only be possible if customers are empowered to control their own consumption patterns. A scheme like RUBS would seem to prevent that empowerment. Since bills are a ratio of the entire building consumption, individual virtuous choices are not being rewarded. Their bills will not change or even worse might go up because of the excessive consumption by neighbors or the building itself, or because of the RUBS provider's greed.

Sincerely,

Serge Bonte



January 31, 2023

Mountain View Rental Housing Committee

City of Mountain View
500 Castro St,
Mountain View, CA 94041

Dear Chair Haines-Livesay and Members of the Rental Housing Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for the use of Ratio Utility Billing Systems (RUBS) in the housing industry. As a housing provider in Mountain View, I understand the importance of promoting conservation and reducing waste.

RUBS provides an effective and cost-efficient solution for sharing the cost of utilities in master metered buildings. It allows tenants to understand their consumption of valuable and limited resources, such as water, and incentivizes them to take actions to conserve. In fact, a recent survey by the National Apartment Association and National Multifamily Housing Council found that water usage decreased by 6-27% after a community implemented RUBS.

Moreover, RUBS is an established industry practice that is used nationally to help residents conserve resources. It has significant fiscal, environmental, and operational impacts, and any changes to the system must undergo a robust and meaningful stakeholder engagement to understand those impacts.

I would encourage the Rental Housing Committee to undertake extensive outreach to those affected by RUBS and to carefully consider any changes to the system. RUBS has proven to be a valuable tool for promoting conservation, and I strongly support its continued use in our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Theresa McFarland

January 31, 2023

Mountain View Rental Housing Committee
City of Mountain View
500 Castro St,
Mountain View, CA 94041

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Sincerely,
Michael D. Pierce

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Michael D. Pierce

Mountain View Rental Housing Provider